

Amendment to the Claims

1 (Currently Amended). A WideBand cross-connect system comprising:

at least one SONET add/drop multiplexer being outfitted so as to support SONET ~~UPSR~~  
~~unidirectional, path-switched rings~~ protection with ~~PDI-PPayload Defect Indicator - Path~~ codes;

a working WideBand switch fabric coupled to said at least one SONET add/drop multiplexer, said working switch fabric receiving a working signal from a first interface on said at least one SONET add/drop multiplexer, said working signal and working payload, said working switch fabric switching said working signal so as to generate a working switched signal and to generate a working ~~PDI-PPayload Defect Indicator - Path~~ code and working switched payload, and providing said working switched signal to a second port on said at least one SONET add/drop multiplexer;

a protect WideBand switch fabric coupled to said at least one SONET add/drop multiplexer, said protect switch fabric receiving a protect signal from a third interface on said at least one SONET add/drop multiplexer, said protect signal and protect payload, said protect switch fabric switching said protect signal so as to generate a protect switched signal and to generate a protect ~~PDI-PPayload Defect Indicator - Path~~ code and protect switched payload, and providing said protect switched signal to a fourth port on said at least one SONET add/drop multiplexer;

wherein said at least one SONET add/drop multiplexer selects between said working switched payload and said protect switched payload to send to a client based upon said working ~~PDI-PPayload Defect Indicator - Path~~ code and said protect ~~PDI-PPayload Defect Indicator - Path~~ code.

2 (Original). A WideBand cross-connect system as in claim 1, wherein said at least one SONET add/drop multiplexer comprises a single SONET add/drop multiplexer.

3 (Original). A WideBand cross-connect system as in claim 1, wherein said at least one SONET add/drop multiplexer comprises a plurality of SONET add/drop multiplexers.

4 (Original). A WideBand cross-connect system as in claim 3, wherein said first port and said third port are on different SONET add/drop multiplexers of said plurality of SONET add/drop multiplexers.

5 (Currently Amended). A method of providing equipment protection in a WideBand cross-connect system comprising the steps of:

- accepting an input client signal, said input client signal comprising payload, in at least one SONET add/drop multiplexer;

- sending said payload to a working and a protect switch fabric;

- switching said payload and generating said ~~PDI-PPayload Defect Indicator - Path~~ codes in each of said working and protect switch fabrics toward said at least one SONET add/drop multiplexer;

- receiving switched payload and said ~~PDI-PPayload Defect Indicator - Path~~ codes from each of said working and protect switch fabrics at said at least one SONET add/drop multiplexer;

- analyzing said ~~PDI-PPayload Defect Indicator - Path~~ codes and selecting said switched payload from either said working or said protect switch fabric as a working client payload based upon said analysis.

6 (Currently Amended). The method of providing equipment protection as in claim 5, wherein said ~~PDI-PPayload Defect Indicator - Path~~ codes comprise a working ~~PDI-PPayload Defect Indicator - Path~~ code and a protect ~~PDI-PPayload Defect Indicator - Path~~ code and said analysis comprises comparing said working ~~PDI-PPayload Defect Indicator - Path~~ code and said protect ~~PDI-PPayload Defect Indicator - Path~~ code to determine which of said working ~~PDI-PPayload Defect Indicator - Path~~ code and said protect ~~PDI-PPayload Defect Indicator - Path~~ code indicates a less defective path.

7 (Original). The method of providing equipment protection as in claim 5, further comprising a step of outputting a SONET signal comprising said working client payload.